

ASCQ strategy

Metacognitive skill targeted: Reflection, critical thinking, strategy use, self-evaluation, self-revision, self-reinforcement

Age group 10+

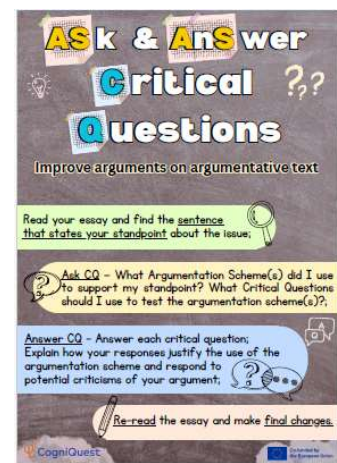
Duration

*30 minutes if you use only the template of the ASCQ strategy in order to reflect on your arguments and to try to improve your argumentative text;

*60 minutes in case you choose to also reflect generally on your text by using the optional/additional editing checklist (2nd page of this template).

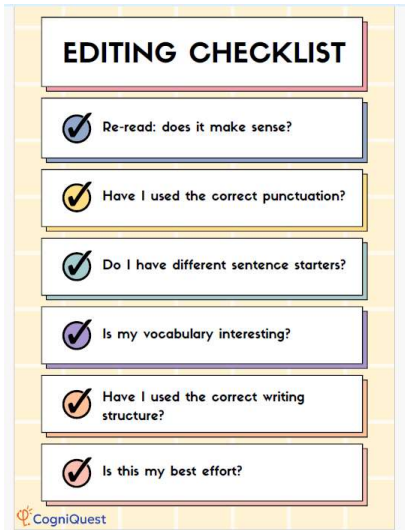
Materials needed

- A pencil/pen
- A printed sheet of the template (1st page)



Clarification:

The use of 2nd page of this template, which presents a simple editing checklist, is optional; you can additionally use it in order to generally edit your argumentative text, after reflecting on its argumentative content.



The image shows a vertical checklist titled "EDITING CHECKLIST" on a yellow background. It contains six items, each with a circular icon and a text box:

- ✓ Re-read: does it make sense?
- ✓ Have I used the correct punctuation?
- ✓ Do I have different sentence starters?
- ✓ Is my vocabulary interesting?
- ✓ Have I used the correct writing structure?
- ✓ Is this my best effort?

The CogniQuest logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the checklist area.

Activity Description

The purpose of this critical reflecting activity is to **help you learn how to improve your text's outcome and to enhance your self-reflection skills on a written text.** It presents the **metacognitive strategy ASCQ - ASk and AnSwEr Critical Questions**, which shall guide you to improve your arguments in an argumentative text. **This revising strategy reminds you to ask and answer critical questions about the arguments you have written in your text**, in order to evaluate their reasonableness and, thus, to strengthen them; e.g., by exercising yourself into asking critical questions, you can anticipate potential counterarguments and alternative standpoints and you can also learn how to answer these critical questions (i.e., to rebut the counterarguments and alternative standpoints).

Instructions

By following the steps of the ASCQ strategy you can reflect about the potential weaknesses of your written arguments and improve the overall quality of your essay.

How can you improve your argumentative text?

- Re-form your text into a text with **more arguments that integrate both sides of an issue** by considering the **alternative perspective**;
- **Increase the number of counterarguments**, alternative standpoints, reasons for the alternative standpoint, and rebuttals.

Here is a step-by-step explanation for the template's use with some examples to help you follow **the four (4) steps of ASCQ strategy**;

(1) Read your essay and find the sentence that states your standpoint about the issue;

e.g., The creation of a factory near my town is a positive thing.

or; The creation of a factory near my town is a negative thing.

(2) Ask CQ – What Argumentation Scheme(s) did I use to support my standpoint?

– What Critical Questions should I use to test the argumentation scheme(s)?;

In case I have used an Argument from Consequences

Argumentation Scheme:

(a) I have used **the good consequences to support** a policy.

e.g., The construction of a factory near my town, which is an urban area, will bring jobs and growth.

or; (b) I have used **bad consequences to reject** a policy.

e.g., The construction of a factory in this area will cause problems for its unique ecosystem, as the nearby lake hosts migratory birds every year, while there are species of salamander and plants that are not only highly sensitive but also live and flourish only in this specific area.

Critical Questions for my consequences-oriented arguments:

1. Are the claimed **consequences likely to happen** if the policy is implemented? **Have I described them sufficiently?**
2. If the policy is implemented, **what evidence support** that these consequences will occur? **Have I included such evidence** in my writing? **Are they sufficiently described?**
3. **Are there other consequences** of the opposite value that should be taken into account? **Have I mentioned any?**

In case I have used an Argument from Example

Argumentation Scheme:

I have used an **argument from example** to support the reason:

There is an example to show that the reason is true; Therefore, the reason is true.

e.g., The construction of a factory near this eco-important area sets dangers for it and should get out of discussion, as the future

of our ecosystem will probably look like the one of the lake "...", where the population of an endangered species that lived there was dramatically reduced after humans' exploiting actions in the area.

Critical Questions for your example-oriented arguments:

1. Is the **example true** and does it match my presented argument? Have I **described it sufficiently**?
2. **Is the example typical** of the kinds of the examples that **illustrate the generalization**?
3. Are there **any special circumstances** that might **impair the generalizability** of the examples?

(3) Answer CQ – Answer each critical question; Explain how your responses justify the use of the argumentation scheme and respond to potential criticisms of your own argument;

*At this step of ASCQ strategy **use the critical questions (CQ)** you asked to yourself in the previous step in order to self-assess the argumentation in your own writing.

***Answer sincerely to these CQ, evaluate and try to enhance your argument** either by improving the written expression, the vocabulary and, generally, the content of your arguments, so that they become more persuasive, either by replacing or/and adding new clues/data/information (e.g., a better/further consequence, or a better/further supportive example).

(4) Re-read the essay and make final changes.

Useful Tips

*Don't worry if you feel like you don't know what critical questions you can ask. The metacognitive processes are quite demanding; just by trying to think of a critical question about your written arguments you have already gained something!

*Don't hesitate to ask your teacher to help you think of a critical question. It's very important to ask your teacher/instructor to model the use of the ASCQ strategy for revising an essay.

*An alternative option, is to set a peer-play, like a debate, so that your peers can help you think of a critical question; Your "opponent" might ask **a series of critical questions (i.e., potential counterarguments) about the acceptability of your argumentative strategies**. With respect to the favorable consequences, your opponent might ask:

(1) How sure are you that the good consequences will actually happen?;

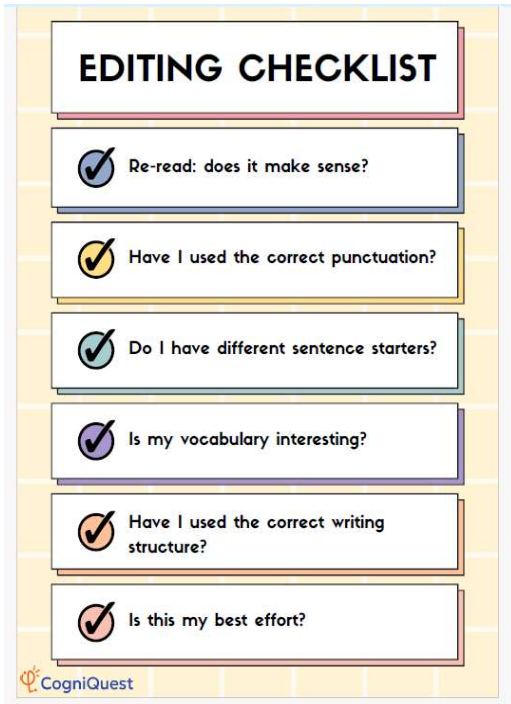
(2) Do you have evidence (facts, data, support) that these consequences probably will happen?;

(3) Are there potentially bad consequences that might happen if we implement the policy?

In turn, the policy's proponent could ask these questions about the reasons for the opponent's perspective (i.e., rebuttals).

*Another option:

After reflecting on your written arguments, evaluating them and, possibly, trying to improve them through self-revision, have a small time-break; Then, take a deep breath and with determination, try to edit your whole text by using as a revision guide the supplementary checklist of the template.



The image shows a digital form titled "EDITING CHECKLIST" with a yellow background and a grid pattern. It contains six items, each with a checkmark icon and a question:

- ✓ Re-read: does it make sense?
- ✓ Have I used the correct punctuation?
- ✓ Do I have different sentence starters?
- ✓ Is my vocabulary interesting?
- ✓ Have I used the correct writing structure?
- ✓ Is this my best effort?

The CogniQuest logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the form.

*Editing checklist
(2nd page of this template)*

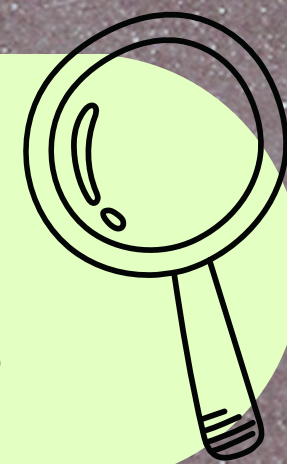
Ask & Answer

critical

questions

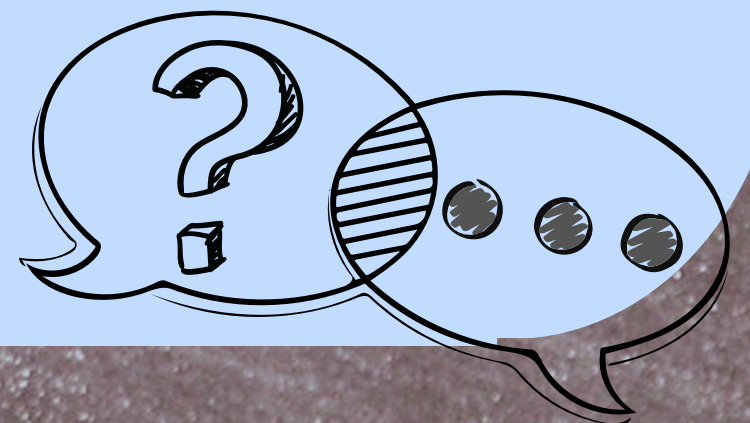
Improve arguments on argumentative text

Read your essay and find the sentence that state your standpoint about the issue;



 Ask CQ – What Argumentation Scheme(s) did I use to support my standpoint? What Critical Questions should I use to test the argumentation scheme(s)?;

Answer CQ – Answer each critical question; Explain how your responses justify the use of the argumentation scheme and respond to potential criticisms of your argument;



 Re-read the essay and make final changes.

EDITING CHECKLIST



Re-read: does it make sense?



Have I used the correct punctuation?



Do I have different sentence starters?



Is my vocabulary interesting?



Have I used the correct writing structure?



Is this my best effort?